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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

A

TRIBUTE

TO THE

MEMORY

OF

JACOB DYCKMAN, M. D.

Late Health Commissioner of the City of New-York, &c.

BEING A DISCOURSE PRONOUNCED

BY HIS FRIEND

HENRY WILLIAM DUCACHET, M. D.

On Monday, January 6th, 1823,

By Order of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of New-York,

AND PUBLISHED BY THEIR REQUEST.

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED BY T. AND J. SWORDS,
No. 99 Pearl-street.

1823.

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At a stated meeting of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of the State of New-York, held at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, on Saturday, December 7, 1822, the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted:—

Whereas the Society have received the painful intelligence of the death of their esteemed associate Jacob Dyckman, M. D.

Resolved, That a respectful notice of his decease be recorded upon the minutes; and that the members of the Society be requested to wear the usual badge of mourning during thirty days.

Resolved, That a discourse, commemorative of his distinguished worth, be pronounced by a member of this body; and that Henry William Ducachet, M. D. be requested to perform this duty.

Resolved, That in token of our high respect for the memory of our deceased fellow-member, the proceedings of this meeting be suspended, and the Society adjourned.

Further resolved, That the foregoing resolutions be published in two of the daily papers of this city, and in one of the public papers of the county of Westchester; and further, that they be attested by the signatures of the President and Secretary.

JOHN W. FRANCIS, M. D. President.
G. M. Richards, Secretary.

New-York, January 14th, 1823.

DEAR SIR,

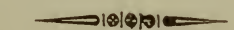
WE have been appointed a committee of the Medico-Chirurgical Society, to return to you their thanks for the able and eloquent manner in which you discharged the duty assigned you; and to request that you will further comply with their wishes, by furnishing to us the manuscript of your Eulogium of Dr. DYCKMAN for publication. Please accept the assurances of our respect, and of the high consideration with which we remain,

Dear Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

F. G. KING,
G. M. RICHARDS, } Committee.
J. W. VETHAKE,

HENRY W. DUCACHET, M. D.



To Messrs. F. G. KING,
G. M. RICHARDS, } Committee, &c.
J. W. VETHAKE,

New-York, January 14th, 1823.

GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE received the note in which you so politely inform me of the resolutions of the Medico-Chirurgical Society, respecting the Eulogy of Dr. DYCKMAN. Although it was written very

hastily, and without any idea that the Society would consider it worthy of publication, I cheerfully comply with your request. Trusting that it will meet with the indulgence which the repeated evidences it exhibits of hurry and immaturity are calculated to secure, I shall, as soon as I shall have made a few corrections in the manuscript, deliver it into your hands.

You will please assure the Society of my sensibility to the honour they have been pleased to confer upon me; and accept for yourselves individually the assurances of my personal consideration and regard.

Gentlemen,

I am respectfully,

Your obedient Servant,

HENRY W. DUCACHET.

PREFACE.

ALTHOUGH the following Discourse was written in the short space of a few hours, and without any view to its publication, I knew not how to refuse the request of the Society. I am very sensible that it cannot bear the scrutiny of the critic, however kindly disposed he might be to overlook its faults. The haste in which it was written may be a reasonable apology for the imperfections of a discourse at the time of its delivery, and yet may not, perhaps, be received as a valid excuse for its deficiencies when printed. I shall not, therefore, bespeak indulgence on that account, as it may very justly be replied, that it might have been improved and corrected for the press.

It would be an affectation of humility in me to say, that I am not deeply sensible of the honour done me by the Society in requesting a copy of the Discourse for publication. I confess, I consider it a high honour, and that their resolutions have had very considerable influence in determining me to publish it. Yet, I hope it will not be considered

as a slight to the members of that respectable body to declare, that my *principal* design in printing this Discourse, is to contradict the unaccountable misrepresentations of it which are circulated to my injury, and to the discredit of the memory of my departed friend. Personal allusions have been found where none were intended; and in several instances my remarks have been misapplied. In justice to myself, therefore, it is proper, perhaps, that it should be published; and, in fairness, it ought to be printed as it was delivered. With a few unimportant *verbal* alterations, I submit it to public perusal, exactly as it was originally written; hoping that in this explanation a sufficient apology will be found for my apparent temerity in publishing it with all its imperfections.

ADDRESS.

Gentlemen of the Society,

DEATH is a monster which appals the stoutest hearts. The soldier, fearless of the battle, and emulous of danger, trembles at his approach. The poor, dejected outcast of fortune, who has lived a life of indigence and penury, who is deprived of every comfort which renders life desirable, and stripped of every hope of improving his condition, is still unwilling to part with the burden which oppresses him, and to bury his sorrows with himself in the grave. The wretched victim of disease, who spends his days and nights in complaints and groans, and calls upon death to relieve him of his pain; even he prefers the lingering of torture to the repose of the grave, and is reluctant to resign that life which is agonized by the very inspirations that prolong it. It is indeed no wonder that the man who has lived a life which his conscience condemns, and has no ground of consolation in death, should be dismayed in

that appalling hour. If he looks back, a long life spent in sins which are soon to appear as swift witnesses against him, strikes terror into his soul: if he dare look forward, the grave, the bar of judgment, and the regions of despair, appear in terrific plainness to his view: he is even afraid to look up for mercy, for his eyes must meet the countenance of that God whom he has offended, and who is soon to sit in judgment upon his soul. He knows that he must shortly close his eyes upon the world in despair; that as he passes through the dark valley of the shadow of death, the ghosts of his former sins will encounter him at every step; and that perhaps the unhappy spirits of the former companions of his guilt will meet him, to apprize him of the terrors and the torments which await him. It is then no wonder that he should be afraid to die. But even the good man, who has no such terrors to alarm him; who, invigorated by faith, looks at death as the termination of all his anxieties and cares, and as the harbinger of a more glorious and happy life, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest; even he feels an instinctive abhorrence of dissolution. But what is it makes death so unwelcome and terrific? The dread uncertainty of the untried scenes to which he is soon to be introduced, the consciousness of being unprepared for the scrutiny he must under-

go, and the tremendous retribution he is to receive, are all calculated to fill a man with horror at the view of death. But all men are not so philosophical as, in their dying moments, to enter into speculations about the unknown regions which their disembodied spirits are to inhabit; all men have not even so much sense of religion as to think of the tremendous judgment to which death is to introduce them; and some can contemplate this awful event with comfort and with hope: yet, all men are afraid to die, or, at least, feel some abhorrence at the thought. There must be, then, some instinctive principle, which, apart from all reflections upon the consequences of death, operates universally upon the minds of men, and makes them sorrowful at this dread event. But what is it? It is the dreadful thought of being *forgotten!* Eternal oblivion has terrors for the mind, which make it prefer the pains and languishing of sickness, the sad reverses of fortune, and all the accumulated troubles of life, to the dread event which will terminate them all. To be forgotten in death by those who knew and loved us in life—O, it is a thought at which the mind revolts. All men are conscious of this feeling; and nature, in kind indulgence to the weakness, has implanted in our breasts a sympathy which makes us gather around the couch of the dying, and assure them by our tears that they shall not be

forgotten. The funeral customs of all nations have arisen from this principle. It is this which kindles the funeral pile, and preserves the beloved ashes of the venerated dead; it is this which furnishes the costly spices and the rich perfumes, to preserve from destruction the form which we have loved; it is this which collects the sympathizing company at the obsequies of the dead, and chants the solemn requiem; it is this which erects the stately mausoleum, plants the humble head-stone, and speaks the praises of departed worth; it is this, my friends, which has assembled us to-day. Death has come in among us, and snatched away from our midst one whom we loved, and whom we cannot be persuaded to forget. We have assembled to pay the becoming tribute of respect to his memory, and to commemorate his worth. Impressed with the solemnity of the occasion, and conscious of my inadequacy to the task assigned me, nothing could have induced me to accept it but your positive command. The character of my deceased friend does indeed deserve a eulogy; (never shall my heart cease to feel the throb of friendship, or my tongue to speak his praises;) but I could wish that his virtues and his worth had been celebrated on this occasion by some more competent eulogist. But confident that the outlines of such a character as his, however rudely or imperfectly sketched, cannot

fail to excite your admiration, and that I have nothing to apprehend from that censorious spirit which would criticise with severity the hasty effusion of friendship, I proceed to the affecting duty which you have assigned me.

Jacob Dyckman was born of highly respectable parentage, at Yonkers, Westchester county, in the state of New-York, on the first of December, 1788. His early years, spent as they were in the retirement and obscurity of the country, furnish no remarkable incidents for the narrative of the biographer. Yet it can hardly be supposed that a mind such as his did not develop some prominent feature, even in the days of his childhood; and especially as he was always the subject of praise among his acquaintance, and of ambitious hope among his friends. Without possessing that vivacity of spirits, or that sprightliness of remark, which are frequently the indications of infant genius, there is said to have been something peculiar in his deportment, and pointed in his conversation, which, at a very early period, excited in the bosoms of his friends a hope that he was destined to be no ordinary man. Accordingly he was sent to the city, to be prepared for his entrance into college. After receiving a very complete and solid preparation at a grammar-school, he was admitted into Columbia College in the year 1806. Although he did not possess

that flippancy which often passes for brilliancy of parts, and obtains for a young man a rank above his fellows who are in reality possessed of more capacity and solidity of mind, he maintained, during the whole period of his collegiate studies, a highly respectable station in his class. There was not in him any of that frivolity of character which leads young men to engage in the fashionable amusements of life; and he was too strongly fortified by principle to be led into dissipation. It is no wonder, then, that he should surpass many of his collegiate associates, who trifled away the time which he devoted to study, in the pursuits of pleasure or the haunts of dissipation. He graduated in the year 1810, after passing through all the classes of that excellent institution. The study of medicine presented itself to him with peculiar attractions. Indeed the choice was a very natural one for him; as the profession of medicine affords an extensive field for the exercise of those benevolent dispositions which he possessed in so eminent a degree, without exposing one to the anxieties and turmoils of public life, or requiring many sacrifices of that diffidence which formed so prominent a feature in his character.

Shortly after his graduation in the arts, he commenced the study of medicine under the pupilage of Dr. Hosack. I need hardly tell

you of his character as a student: there is an almost infallible connexion between distinction in life and diligence in the term of pupilage. Seldom, very seldom does it happen that an indolent student, or a conceited coxcomb, who imagines that he has natural talents sufficient to supersede the necessity of industry, becomes a distinguished, or even respectable, physician. A man's professional character is generally determined by the habits he acquires in the office of his preceptor; and should such a one as I have just described succeed in life, so as to acquire any degree of repute, he is regarded by the discerning portion of the community only as the despicable creature of artifice, or as the spoiled brat of chance. But very seldom indeed does it occur, notwithstanding the precariousness and inconstancy of medical reputation, that a diligent student does not become a skilful and celebrated practitioner. I can well remember the impression that was produced upon my mind when I first entered the office of Dr. Hosack, upon hearing the character universally ascribed to Dr. Dyckman. He was held up as a pattern of diligence in his studies, of propriety in his deportment in the office, and as an example in all respects worthy of imitation. From the character he then held, every one augured his future usefulness and distinction. In the spring of 1813 he received the ho-

nours of the doctorate, in one of the early classes that were graduated in the newly organized College of Physicians and Surgeons. On his public examination, he presented and defended an Inaugural Thesis on the Pathology of the Human Fluids; a production which, afterwards revised and enlarged, laid the foundation of his professional fame, and is destined to be remembered as a work of standard excellence on the subject of which it treats.

Immediately after his graduation he was appointed one of the Physicians of the City Dispensary, a situation which, at that time, was not to be obtained by the influence of family connexions, or by acquiescence in a contracted and mercenary policy. Dr. Dyckman was then an obscure young man, without friends to urge his claims, or to exert their influence in his behalf. He continued to discharge the arduous duties of this charity for several years; and at last resigned his situation, partly, as he told me, through disgust at the conduct which he witnessed in the institution, and partly in consequence of increased demands upon his time by the duties of a more important office. The literary labours in which he was engaged at this period, I shall at present omit to mention, as they will hereafter be noticed in detail. It must suffice to remark here, that amidst the almost incessant occupation of his

time by the duties of the Dispensary, he still found leisure for study, and for authorship. It is often wondered at that physicians, whose time is so constantly employed, and whose leisure, one would suppose, was rendered unfit for study by the fatigues and labours of professional duty, should find time enough to become authors. However paradoxical it may appear, it is a remarkable fact, that the most voluminous writers on the science of medicine have generally been men of great and extensive practice, who have been forced to snatch their opportunities for writing in the hurried intervals of business. Whether they thus seek relief from the incessant anxieties to which the occurrences of business and the scenes of practice expose them, or whether it be the result of some inexplicable anomaly of the mind; it is a fact attested by the history of almost every celebrated medical author.

In the year 1819 Dr. Dyckman was appointed the Surgeon of the New-York Alms-House. This charity, although extensive in its character, presents, in consequence of its location beyond the limits of the city, and the peculiar description of the objects of its bounty, a very limited field for the cultivation or display of surgical dexterity. During Dr. Dyckman's attendance, however, several great and important cases occurred in the institution, which gave him an

opportunity of exhibiting that versatility of talent, which can familiarize itself to the knife without an exclusive attention to operative surgery. From the judgment and deliberation with which he conducted his operations, and the prudent dexterity which he exhibited in their performance, there is good reason to believe, that when experience had given him a necessary confidence, and matured the dexterous talent he possessed, he would have become a highly respectable and skilful surgeon. I say a *surgeon*, not supposing that he would have contented himself with the mere mechanical adroitness of an operator. He had more liberal views of his profession than to satisfy his mind with so grovelling an ambition. He knew that expertness in the use of the knife may, by mere dint of practice, be acquired by any one not unconquerably stupid; and that many a man, who was intended by nature for nothing more than a clever mechanic, but who has by an unfortunate *error loci* become a member of a liberal profession, may make a figure in the theatre of a hospital.*

* No prejudices are more illiberal, or more deserving of reprehension, than those which are sometimes cherished by members of the same profession against each other, in consequence of their devoting themselves to different branches of the science. I hope, therefore, that I shall not be suspected of indulging any pitiful animosity against those who have chosen surgery as the department best suited to their talents. I consider an *enlightened* surgeon to

In the year 1821* Dr. Dyckman was appointed to the office of Health Commissioner. This

be quite as respectable as a physician; and intend my remarks to apply to those only who think that surgery consists merely in amputating limbs, taking up arteries, &c. and hence practise it, not as a liberal profession, but as a *mechanical trade*. At the same time, I am free to confess it as my opinion, that surgeons generally are too apt to undervalue study, and to attach an unmerited importance to incessant and minute dissection as the only means of acquiring manual dexterity in operating. I believe that a student of medicine can be much more profitably employed than in the charnal-house; and that if he spends his *whole* pupilage in dissecting, he will be no better qualified to practise surgery at the completion of his term than he was at its commencement. And, after all, to perform the *highest* operation of surgery, does not require one half the intellectual effort that is necessary for the judicious, speedy, and successful treatment of a fever, or a pleurisy.

* The haste with which the Discourse was written caused me to forget several of the most honourable incidents in the life of Dr. Dyckman, which should have been inserted here. In the year 1819 he was commissioned by the Board of Health of New-York to proceed to Philadelphia, for the purpose of investigating the nature and origin of a pestilential fever which prevailed in a section of that city. He discharged this important duty with so much manly independence, so much professional discretion, and so much satisfaction to the public, that he was sent upon a similar mission to Philadelphia in the succeeding year. In the year 1821 he was elected Recording Secretary of the New-York Literary and Philosophical Society, an office which he held to the day of his death, with universal satisfaction to the members of that body. Nothing can show, in a more convincing manner, the estimation in which he was held by that learned society, than the fact, that a special committee has, by their unanimous resolution, been appointed to prepare a biographical memoir of him for publication in the next volume of their Transactions. The respectability of the committee charged with this duty, is an additional honour to his memory. In 1822, in spite of the intrigues which were used for a host of others, he was appointed by the honourable the Regents of the University, a Trustee of the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

situation, as every other in the government, is generally conferred upon those who have most signalized themselves by a zealous devotion to the interests of the dominant party. Much as it is to be regretted that political considerations so often outweigh the claims of merit, the evil perhaps can hardly be avoided in a government like ours. Gentlemen, I retract the supposition. The evil *can* be, ought to be, avoided. Were our rulers governed by a higher and more honourable policy, than that of rewarding, by public favour, the sycophancy of their parasites and the clamorous importunity of their political adherents, we should no longer see men destitute of education, of talents, and of character, who have neither professional merit nor public confidence, preferred, on mere political considerations, to men who are the ornaments of the profession, and who would dignify any official station; we should no longer witness the triumph of persons of the very lowest professional standing, and experience the mortification of seeing men of distinguished abilities and worth, retiring from the inglorious competition, and contenting themselves with obscurity and neglect; we should not, as recently, have been shocked with the unfeeling rapacity of the despicable herd who, before the body of our departed friend had been deposited in the grave, were devising the means of succeeding to his office.

Pardon, Gentlemen, the warmth of wounded friendship—but I desist from a development which would disgust and exasperate you.*

It does not always happen, however, that even the rancorous leaders of a party are so far infatuated by political partialities, as to confer offices of high responsibility upon the most clamorous individuals of the faction. It will sometimes happen, even amidst the turmoils and contentions of a nomination caucus, that modest merit will attract attention. Dr. Dyckman, firm and unwavering as he was in his political opinions, and valuing as he did the interests of the party to which he was attached, was not boisterous in proclaiming his sentiments, not bitter in denouncing his political opponents, not violent enough to be considered as a member deserving the rewards or the notice of the party. I know not what influence may have been ex-

* The very same reasons which induced me to suppress the disgraceful transactions here alluded to at the time the Discourse was delivered, prevent me from disclosing them now. I cannot, however, but state, as an apology for the severity with which I have expressed myself, that attempts were made to supplant him *during his last illness*, when he was unable to vindicate himself from the insinuations which were circulated to his discredit, with the view of causing his removal. I have no objections to any honourable exertion to obtain an office, but I abhor all mean and disgraceful tricks to effect any end whatever, and feel myself *called upon* by *the occasion* to denounce the infamous proceedings that were lately had recourse to, by certain men, to procure the office of Health Commissioner.

erted in his favour by his political and personal friends; but knowing, as I do, that he was preferred before some whose political influence was far greater than his, and whose friends were more numerous and importunate than any he possessed, I have always considered his appointment as the reward of merit.

By his appointment as Health Commissioner, he became, *ex officio*, a member of the Board of Health. It is principally in seasons of pestilence that a member of that body has any opportunity of signalizing himself as a public officer. No sooner had the epidemic which lately desolated the fairest portion of our city, made its appearance, than the profession, the board, and the public, looked to Dr. Dyckman as their principal counsellor. His medical associate in the commission of health, by an unfortunate inadvertence which the most experienced might have committed, or, perhaps, through the mischievous insinuations of jealousy and malice, lost, in a great measure, the confidence of the public. Dr. Dyckman at this time was labouring under a severe indisposition; yet, feeling the importance of his station, and animated by a sense of duty, he scorned to evade by flight the responsibilities and the dangers of his office. Contrary to the remonstrances of his friends, he determined to remain in the city, and for some weeks spent his time alter-

nately in his bed and at the sittings of the Board of Health. His feeble constitution, already undermined by a strong predisposition to pulmonary disease, could not support the anxieties of his mind, and his unusual bodily exertions at this period of terror and dismay. He was shortly compelled to request permission of the Board to retire into the country to recruit his health. He proceeded to the residence of his father, at King's-Bridge—never to return. After lingering for several weeks, exhausted by the hectic and the cough of consumption, he died on Thursday, the 5th of December last, with the composure and the triumph of a Christian.

It is impossible to contemplate the character of Dr. Dyckman without feelings of respect, and even emotions of admiration.

As a physician, he was versed in the scientific departments of his profession, not contenting himself with mere elementary knowledge, but ambitious of becoming familiar with the great masters of the art. He delighted in his books, and justly merited the character of a well-read physician. But he was not a mere speculative man, versed in the doctrines of the schools, and unskilled in their practical application. It was in his admirable practical sagacity that his great merit consisted. Not possessing naturally a remarkable quickness of perception, he seemed to have oftentimes an

intuitive discernment, which enabled him to discover, without the least apparent difficulty, the nature and seat of the case before him. I have often been surprised, while accompanying him in his visits, that a man so deliberate and prudent even in the ordinary conversation of life, should be able to arrive at so speedy a judgment in a professional case as he frequently exhibited. In his practice he was equally successful: judicious in the choice of his remedies, he was quick in his decisions, and vigorous in their application.

The success of his practice is the best eulogy that can be pronounced upon his professional skill. I have often heard him speak of it as one of the most delightful contemplations of his life, (and indeed have had constant opportunities of verifying his assertions by personal knowledge,) that of the numerous cases of disease which presented themselves in the practice of the Dispensary, where a physician necessarily prescribes under many disadvantages, he lost so very few patients. It is no inconclusive evidence of a physician's skill, that he should not lose more than two or three patients out of the hundreds that annually fall under his care, whose constitutions are broken down by the accumulated miseries of poverty and complicated disease, and who cannot procure even those comforts of life which are indispensable

to the efficient operation of medicines.* Gentlemen, I do indeed hold to the maxim, *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*. I think it contains a tenderness of sentiment which every honourable mind must feel to be congenial. But I do not stand before you to praise the dead at the expense of truth; to flatter the vanity of surviving relatives; or even to indulge the feelings of personal affection, which might prompt a higher eulogy of my departed friend than he justly deserves. I appeal to those of you who knew him, whether I speak the language of extravagance in saying, that he was one of the first practical physicians of his age in our city.

* The success of medical treatment in the City Dispensary, considering the circumstances of the patients generally prescribed for at that institution, is unparalleled, I believe, in the history of public charities. During the last year only 54 have died out of 6961, who have been the subjects of prescription. This fact, while it does great credit to the skill and faithfulness of the physicians of that establishment, should arrest the attention of the community, and secure to it a permanent and liberal support. It is to be regretted, that while schemes for the accomplishment of remote and uncertain good command the liberality of our citizens to an almost incredible amount, this invaluable institution, in which every individual in the community is, in some manner, interested, and the benefits of which are seen and felt by all, should be suffered to languish for want of patronage. On a recent occasion, an appeal from an establishment obviously instituted, under the lure of a specious but doubtful charity, for the advancement and emolument of certain individuals, was met with a promptitude and munificence worthy of a nobler object; but the claims of the Dispensary, strong as they are upon the benevolence of the community, are comparatively disregarded.

But Dr. Dyckman was not the mere physician. He possessed a noble expansion of soul, which would not permit him to confine himself to the routine of practice. He has justly attained no humble character as an author. I claim not for him, indeed, the veneration that is due to exalted genius, but the more enviable praise of being a useful and a practical writer. His style was by no means splendid or ambitious, but neat, perspicuous, and simple.

His first literary effort, "An Inaugural Dissertation on the Pathology of the Human Fluids," would have done honour to the pen of an older and more experienced writer. Time would not permit, nor would the occasion allow me to enter into a review of this excellent production, or into a defence of the humoral pathology. I cannot, however, refrain from observing, (although, perhaps, I ought to be more diffident in speaking of subjects which belong to a profession no longer my own,) that I have always considered the present fashionable clamour against the humoral pathology, as absurd and ridiculous in the extreme. I confess I can see no reason why the fluids, or any other part of the living system, should be exempt from disease. I believe that there are many disorders, the symptoms of which are wholly unaccountable, unless ascribed to humoral impurities; and many which cannot be cured but by

directing the remedies to the fluids. Physicians are too much in the habit, in the present day, of overlooking the vast and powerful agency of the fluids in the animal economy: and of ascribing all its operations, morbid as well as natural, to the action of the solids. They are continually talking about healthy action, deranged action, morbid action, peculiar action, sympathetic action, irregular action, &c. Action has been said to be the first, and the second, and the third, and the last requisite of an orator: and so, it seems, *action* is to be every thing in pathology too. But I desist.—The majority of those who hear me are well acquainted with the discordant theories of the solidists and the humoralists. Suffice it to state, that Dr. Dyckman's Inaugural Thesis is a defence of the humoral pathology in the modified form in which it is taught, and has for years been taught, by the distinguished Professor of the Practice of Physic in this University. Dr. Dyckman, as I have before said, was his pupil; and fired with the zeal of his preceptor, he boldly stepped forward in the vindication of truth, at a time when it could only be expected to draw down upon him the ridicule and the condemnation of the faculty. The doctrine is defended, however, with acknowledged dexterity; and explained with a readiness and ingenuity which show him to have been familiar with his subject. In the

judgment of the avowed opponents of the theory it espouses, it displays more recondite research, more dexterity of statement, more ingenuity of argument, more plausibility of style and manner, than almost any other production of the kind.*

Dr. Hosack is so intimately associated with every thing relating to this subject, from his having been the first to revive the doctrines of the Boerhaavian school, that I would be guilty of a palpable injustice, were I to withhold from him the praise which is his due, for his early, and constant, and able, and successful inculcation of the Humoral Pathology. At a time when the fascinating theory of Brown became the prevailing doctrine of our schools, and the eloquence of Rush threatened to entail upon our country the follies of that brilliant but delusive system, Dr. Hosack stood forth the advocate of the Humoral Pathology. With a judgment singularly happy, he divested it of many inconsistencies and absurdities which had rendered it offensive; and demonstrated its truth by the practical efficacy of its principles and precepts. By the application of these in a great and extensive charity, he has commanded the acquiescence of admiring crowds of pupils, gained a popularity and reputation as a teacher

* See Philadelphia Journal of the Medical and Physical Sciences, vol. iv. p. 370.

which are not soon to perish, and justly merited the title of the American Boerhaave.

I could not with propriety detain you with an extended notice of Dr. Dyckman's remaining productions It must suffice to state, that his improved edition of Duncan's Dispensatory, published in the year 1818, is by far the best and most useful work upon that subject. His monthly reports of the diseases occurring in the City Dispensary, published originally in the Monthly Magazine, and afterwards in the Literary Journal, evince a talent for close observation, and a judgment in recording facts, which would not dishonour the masterly reports of Drs. Willan and Bateman.

Several fugitive productions of his pen are preserved in the periodical journals of our country; the most remarkable of which are, an Essay upon *Adipocere*, published in the Transactions of the New-York Lyceum of Natural History; and an anomalous case of Surgery which fell under his care.

When we consider the successful manner in which Dr. Dyckman acquitted himself on the several occasions when he appeared before the public as an author, we cannot but regret that he should have been prevented, by death, from accomplishing a plan which he had long entertained, of editing Dr. Bateman's admirable work on the Cutanei, with notes and improve-

ments. He had studied cutaneous diseases with great minuteness of attention, with this special view; and it is owing perhaps to his excellent practical acquaintance with this obscure and intricate subject, making him distrustful of himself on account of the complicated difficulties which he knew so well, that we have now to lament that this task was never undertaken. He had long had in contemplation a work upon the vegetable Materia Medica of the United States, and had made very considerable progress in the collection of materials towards it. He, however, had resolved that it should be, as it ought to be, the labour of years. Man proposes, but God disposes. Death suddenly interrupted his labours, and leaves us another instance of the uncertainty of human plans, and the vanity of human hopes.*

* He has left unfinished an Essay on Apparitions, the design of which is to refer to a morbid condition of the sensorium, the supposed supernatural visions of which we have so many strange accounts. This paper is very comprehensive in its plan; and, as he had, for some time, made it a subject of study and reflection, there is no doubt it would have been very interesting. Whether this theory is or is not the true one, or whether, as is most probable, there is something unaccountably mysterious in many of these appearances, it is certain that they cannot satisfactorily be resolved into the effects of mere superstition. The theory espoused by Dr. Dyckman will, no doubt, explain most of these cases; perhaps his ingenuity would have shown its complete application to them all. He was also about to prepare for publication a paper on the use of emetics in convulsive and spasmodic diseases. He had used them very extensively in these cases; and informed me that he had found

In contemplating the character of Dr. Dyckman as a literary man, and as an author, it is proper to notice his connexion as one of the editors of the New-York Medical and Physical Journal He had long conversed, in the confidence of friendship, with a few of his professional intimates, on the subject of commencing a new periodical work in this city, devoted to the cultivation and diffusion of medical science. He regretted that this extensive metropolis, containing so large a number of physicians, and so strong a body of medical talent, could not boast of a single respectable medical journal.* These repeated suggestions were finally matur-

them speedily to resolve the most obstinate and alarming convulsions. It is really to be regretted, that his experience on this interesting subject should have been lost to the public. It is but justice that I should state, that Dr. Joseph M. Smith, of this city, is entitled to the merit of having revived the attention of the profession to the efficacy of emetics in these cases. An excellent paper on this subject, marked by an enviable experimental talent, and presenting the results of an extensive experience, was published by this gentleman some years ago, in the first volume of the Transactions of the Physico-Medical Society of New-York.

* There was indeed *a* medical journal still in existence at this time, but it had degenerated so far from its former character, that it could no longer be considered as any thing but the mere *ghost* of the work which had immortalized the names of Miller and of Mitchill. Instead of the youthful vigour for which it was distinguished in the days of those able editors, it was now remarkable only for feebleness, and petulance, and decrepitude, the natural concomitants of a premature old age induced by *inanition* and *intemperance*. It is now happily entirely defunct. Its death would have been just matter of congratulation to the profession years ago.

ed into a plan, and gave rise to the New-York Medical and Physical Journal. Dr. Dyckman zealously entered into the enlightened and lofty views of the spirited gentlemen who projected this work; and was proud to associate his name as an editor with the names of men, who, though only commencing life, had justly acquired a character for talents, and a literary reputation, of which veteran cultivators of science might have been ambitious. Under the auspices of this able trio, the New-York Medical and Physical Journal had attained its fourth number,—triumphing over difficulties which threatened to destroy it, and which would have discouraged men less fitted for the task; pursuing a liberal, yet independent policy, which recommended it to the patronage and support of the united profession; and promising to surpass, in celebrity and usefulness, every similar production in our country. Judge of the loss it sustains in the death of Dr. Dyckman.*

Respectable as he was as a professional and literary man, it is in his personal and private character that he appears to highest advantage. Professional distinction and literary reputation may be attained by men unamiable in the in-

* The surviving editors are John W. Francis, M. D. Professor of Obstetrics in the University of New-York, and John B. Beck, M. D. Fellow of the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

tercourse of life, and not entitled to the least respect on account of their deportment or their virtues. But never was an individual more truly amiable than was Dr. Dyckman in his private virtues and manners. Among those who knew him, I think I may truly say, his suavity of disposition became almost proverbial: and by those who were comparatively strangers, this much at least of him was known, that he was a man of the most remarkable urbanity of character. Seldom in my long and familiar intercourse with him, have I ever seen his placid temper disturbed by the little irritating incidents which daily occur to every man. He seemed to regard them as unworthy of an emotion. Nor did this amiableness proceed from an absence of the delicate sensibilities of an honourable mind. No man was ever more sensitive to an indignity. And although I have never known him to indulge for a moment the predominance of angry feelings in his bosom, I have seen the glow of lofty indignation mantle upon his cheek, and have witnessed the generous burst of feeling, when his honour has been wounded, the character of a friend assailed, or the principles which he cherished wantonly impugned. The most of those who hear me are well acquainted with the fact, that notwithstanding Dr. Dyckman's remarkable amiableness of character, it was frequently his misfor-

tune to be involved in controversy. A stranger to that disputatious temper which is ever ready to seek occasions for debate, his very amiableness brought him into contests. There are men who, with all their eagerness for controversy, are loath to encounter antagonists of any sturdiness of temper; and seek to provoke to opposition men whose mildness of character affords some probability of a defeat by means of rude and impetuous assaults. It was his misfortune to be assailed by several such men. And although his amiable disposition could not be persuaded to proceed with deserved severity against the wanton disturbers of his character and his peace, we all know that he, in every instance, succeeded in their defeat, and drove them humbled from the public view. In a recent instance, fresh in the memory of us all, he most successfully detected and exposed an execrable conspiracy against his character by some of the hungry expectants of his office; and in a most triumphant manner put the miscreants to silence and to shame. In another case, in which a gross and wanton attack was made upon his professional reputation, he evinced, that with all his constitutional amenity of temper, he was possessed of a spirit which was not with impunity to be roused. With a firmness which awed into submission the dastardly traducer of his character, he extorted

from him a public recantation, and an honourable, though reluctant, testimony to his integrity and his worth.*

Time would fail me to speak of all the virtues of this estimable character; and to tell you of his filial affection, and of his excellence in the relations of a brother and a friend. O! there was a tenderness in his friendship, which I have a thousand times experienced, but which I would in vain endeavour to describe. Hear the touching language of bereaved affection bear-

* It is really painful to me to be under the necessity of adverting, even obscurely, to these unpleasant circumstances. Called upon as I was to illustrate the life and character of Dr. Dyckman, I should not have felt myself justified in passing over these events had they even issued in his discomfiture and disgrace. Much less, then, would I have deserved the name of his friend, had I timidly suppressed circumstances so creditable to his memory, and so strongly illustrative of his character. I am aware that it may be said, that these unpleasant allusions did not comport with the solemnity of the occasion at which they were made. I grant that they should have been avoided, if possible; but I can conceive of no occasion that can annul the great and paramount obligation of speaking the truth whenever it may be necessary. If I have unnecessarily revived the recollection of these unhappy occurrences, it has not been with any unkind feelings towards the surviving parties. For although I have always abhorred their conduct, and shall, I trust, never be afraid to express my disapprobation, I cherish towards them no personal animosity, and have no intention of doing to them the least injury. Severe as is the language I have used, (and I am willing to acknowledge that it might with propriety have been milder than it is,) the reader would, I am confident, excuse my warmth could he fully know the circumstances which occasioned it. I feel that I have fulfilled the utmost requisitions of a charitable forbearance, by suppressing their names, and thus preserving them from public execration.

ing testimony to his worth:—"All who were acquainted with the deceased will delight to dwell on the amenity of his disposition, and the blameless tenor of his life. Remarkably free from the malignant passions, his heart was the seat of generous feelings, and was ever alive to the sensibilities of humanity. In every sphere in which he moved, his worth was confessed; and in every situation to which private confidence or public favour called him, his zeal and assiduity were incessant and unwearied. He has left behind him many connected by the endearments of friendship: none who can deny the benevolence of his heart, or the purity of his character."*

Dr. DYCKMAN, in the days of his health, did not view religion as the great and important subject in which every man has a personal concern superior to every other interest. So far as a becoming respect for it was concerned, he was unexceptionable; and in the duties of morality generally, I believe he was as sincere, as conscientious, and as irreproachable as any man can be without the sanctifying influence of religion. He never made any religious profes-

* New-York Medical and Physical Journal, vol. i. p. 523. To this editorial obituary notice of Dr. DYCKMAN, marked by a beauty of style, a loftiness of sentiment, and a tenderness of feeling, highly creditable to the work, I am indebted for several particulars in the life of our friend.

sion, though he was often heard to express a partiality for the Episcopal Church. His fault on this great subject was, that he considered morality as the sum and substance of religion: and conscious of an irreproachable character on that score, he rested contented here. But in his last days he obtained a truer view of the subject. He was enabled to discover that the high and holy law of God is the required standard of morality, and not our own imperfect, and often erroneous, conceptions of duty. He discovered, that however amiable and correctly moral a man may be in the estimation of the world, the best actions of his life, and the noblest efforts of his virtue, fall far short of that exalted standard; and that, so far from having any ground of boasting of his morality, or of depending upon it as the means of his acceptance with his Maker, the purest man has reason to be humbled at his imperfections, and to confess that his life has been far less pure than it ought to have been. I would not be understood as decrying or undervaluing morality without religion; even this unsanctified morality is amiable in itself, and is productive of unquestionable benefit to society. But I contend that it does not, and cannot, from its very nature, claim the favour of God, or entitle its possessor to the rewards and happiness of a future state. The lamentable depravity of man

even in his best estate, and the utter impossibility of his conciliating the favour of God by any moral excellence of which he is capable, is a truth which discovered itself to the philosophers of heathen antiquity, and which derives confirmation from the religious practices of every people. It was this which gave rise to the sacrifices of the Mosaic law, under which, in typical anticipation of the great atonement which was in the fulness of time to be made for the world, the blood of bulls and of goats was shed for the expiation of sin. And sacrifices of some description or other have always been a part of religion, even among those whom the light of revelation has never reached. Accordingly we find them, under the consciousness of being obnoxious to the judgments of the offended Deity, devising a thousand means of appeasing his vengeance, and of propitiating his favour. We see the deluded subject of a sanguinary superstition, offering up in sacrifice the fruit of his body for the sin of his soul; torturing himself with all the cruelties his ingenuity can devise, in satisfaction for his offences; and giving his very life as an expiation for its frailties. The shocking triumphs of the car of Juggernaut, the Moloch that now holds a bloody and execrable sway over the benighted regions of the East; the emaciated pilgrims who, in numberless multitudes, press to this worship of the powers of

darkness; the austere and toilsome penance they endure; the remorseless spirit of their homage; and the cruel rites which they perform to propitiate the obscene and odious monster which they worship; all proclaim the truth, that man cannot, by any moral efforts of his own, deserve the favour of his God. It has pleased God, however, to provide for man an efficient and prevailing sacrifice for sin; by which guilt may be removed, and an acceptable satisfaction offered for his imperfect obedience. I regret that I have not been able to obtain any particular information as to the experiences of Dr. Dyckman's mind on these great points, as they would, no doubt, have afforded matter for interesting and edifying reflection on this occasion. It must suffice to state, that he was enabled to discern in the death and sacrifice of Christ, his Saviour, an appropriate and complete salvation; to enjoy, through him, that rapturous communion with God, which it is sometimes the privilege of the dying Christian to experience as the foretaste and the pledge of that fuller glory upon which he is soon to enter; and to view the grave, not as the dreary bed of annihilation, or as the vestibule of the dungeons of eternal misery, but as the consecrated gate of the paradise of God, beyond which life and immortality appear, in ravishing perspective, to the eye of faith. After enjoying the assurance of for-

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given sin, and triumphing in the faith of the Gospel of Christ, his spirit was summoned to the world of glory, to join, we trust, the anthems of the blest, and to receive the inheritance of the redeemed of the Lord. Let me die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like his.

THE END.

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